

this information to the committee on Gore's behalf.¹²⁵

Fully intending to act in their "elected" capacity as members of the Committee of Twenty-Five to enact the resolutions of the Declaration, Waddell's committee had also worked to persuade Mayor Silas P. Wright and his administration to vacate their posts. Frank Stedman and Charles Worth were selected from the committee to find Wright, the aldermen, and Chief of Police Melton and encourage them to submit their resignations. Wright, in the face of overpowering intimidation in city hall and armed conflict in the streets, disliked resigning under such pressure but agreed to do so. Melton also agreed to resign if he were given the remainder of his salary as police chief.¹²⁶

Waddell's committee considered their options and selected a group of men who would be representatives of their wards and elected to the Board of Alderman should the resignations eventuate. As a group, the committee went to city hall around three o'clock to meet with the existing members who had been called to city hall for a special meeting at 4:00 P. M. by various representatives of the committee, Gore, or Chadbourn. One by one, the old board resigned and voted to approve the entry of a new member to the board so that the old board was phased out into the new.¹²⁷ The last to resign was Mayor Wright because he saw that "the business men had expressed

dissatisfaction" with his administration and had requested that he step down. Wright subsequently was replaced with Waddell, who was unanimously elected by the new board.¹²⁸

One of the black aldermen forced to resign was John G. Norwood, who had been appointed by the governor to his position to represent the Second Ward during the restructuring of the city's charter in 1897. Norwood was told by the city clerk and treasurer to report at 4:00 to the city's offices on the afternoon of the rioting. Upon his arrival at city hall, Norwood was met by other members of the Wright administration. As they began their meeting, two vacancies on the board were filled by C. H. Ganzler for the Fifth Ward and H. P. West for the Second Ward.¹²⁹ Other members of the Wright administration were also compelled to resign, including Chief of Police Melton, resigning after a private conversation with Rountree, who advised Melton to step down because he couldn't guarantee Melton's safety otherwise. Melton recalled that there

¹²⁵ *Contested Election Case*, 249.

¹²⁶ McDuffie, "Politics in Wilmington," 698-699; *Wilmington Messenger*, November 17, 1898.

¹²⁷ Bellamy testified that the transition was "done decently and in order without any friction and under the advice of the most learned lawyers of the city." A few resignations were secured from Aldermen after the meeting and their replacements were similarly elected and sworn in. *Contested Election Case*, 20-21, 249; Keith, *Memories*, 112; Minutes of the Wilmington Board of Aldermen, State Archives, North Carolina Office of Archives and History, Raleigh.

¹²⁸ The new board consisted of C. H. Ganzler and Rev. J. W. Kramer from the First Ward, H. P. West and William H. Sprunt from the Second Ward, Hugh MacRae and J. Allan Taylor of the Third Ward, Charles W. Worth, Preston L. Bridgers from the Fourth Ward, and B. Frank King and A. B. Skelding from the Fifth Ward. Edgar Parmele was selected to replace Melton as chief of police by Waddell's board and M. F. Heiskel Gouvenier was named assistant chief of police. John J. Furlong, member of the machine gun squad, was promoted to police captain. The *Wilmington Dispatch* of November 10, 1898 went to press while shots were still being fired and the coup was taking place. The paper threw support behind Waddell for mayor: "In selecting a man for the chief executive of the city, let the committee not forget the services of our most tried and true citizen; the man who led the citizens this morning and avenged their honor; the man who will have good government and peace or blood—Alfred Moore Waddell." Hayden, *WLI*, 100; Rountree, "Memorandum," James Cowan, "The Wilmington Race Riot," *Wilmington Messenger* November 10, 11, 1898.

¹²⁹ *Contested Election Case*, 20-21.